**8. In their study of students’ reasons for online plagiarism, Comas-Forgas and Sureda-Negre (201 0) found that some students say it “is easier, simpler and more comfortable than doing the work yourself” (p. 223). Can you suggest arguments that would help persuade students that online plagiarism, while easy and quick, is not in their best interests?**

**‘Not necessarily a bad thing …’: a study of online plagiarism amongst**

**undergraduate students**

Although not wholly consistent, other studies suggest that internet-based plagiarism is most prevalent amongst male students, those in their early years of study and those who are relatively proficient users of the internet (Ashworth et al. 2003; Underwood and Szabo 2003; Underwood 2006).

For some researchers, student propensity to plagiarize is seen as being led directly by the structure and nature of the internet itself—not least the abundant access to written information and other people that the internet

offers. In this sense online plagiarism can be seen as constituting a form of ‘electronic opportunism’ on the part of net-savvy students (Rocco and Warglien 1995).

The suggestion has been made, for example, that students perceive online plagiarism offences as being significantly less dishonest than similar offences using printed sources (Baruchson-Arbib and Yaari 2004).

Yet another group of commentators portray students’ online cyber-plagiarism as less determined by the internet per se, but instead reflecting the changing nature of the student experience within the massified university systems of the early twenty-first century.

Thus cyber-plagiarism is argued to stem from the increased competitiveness and pressure felt by students to achieve high grades and a ‘good’ overall degree classification.

Moreover, students are argued to be facing a host of more immediate issues such as time constraints to produce written work and alienation from legitimate sources of academic support due to the inaccessibility of teaching staff and library resources (Ashworth et al. 1997; Underwood and Szabo 2004; Breen and Maassen 2005).

From this perspective, cyber-cheating can constitute a necessary survival technique for some students.

**Preventing Plagiarism (Jocoy, Christine and DiBiase, David)**

While recognizing the importance of plagiarism detection, we are also interested in prevention. Our own experience with student infractions supports the conclusion of Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) researchers that many students have yet to develop a clear sense of appropriate Internet use in written assignments (CAI research, 2005). Other researchers found actual observed infractions to be associated with a lack of knowledge about plagiarism (Soto, Anand, and McGee, 2004). Many educators view explicit plagiarism instruction as the best means of prevention (Conradson and Hernandez-Ramos, 2004; Harris, 2004; Vernon, Bigna, and Smith, 2001). Recent case study research provides support for the effectiveness of incorporating plagiarism instruction into individual courses. Soto, Anand, and McGee (2004) found that students who received no explicit plagiarism instruction plagiarized twice as often as those who participated in active instructional activities such as class discussions of definitions of plagiarism, review of Turnitin.com plagiarism reports, and exercises requiring students to identify instances of plagiarism in example essays. We also tested the impact on infraction rates of providing explicit plagiarism instruction in the form of an expectation management strategy introduced prior to

students’ preparation of assignments.

The use of Turnitin.com improved our ability to detect cut-and-paste plagiarism measurably. While the automated process of checking papers was not necessarily faster than manual checking, it was certainly more thorough, enabling us to adhere and enforce to a stricter definition of plagiarism. We did not use Turnitin.com during the initial grading of these assignments, but we have incorporated its use into recent offerings of the course by making it part of the grading criteria presented to students. Braumoeller and Gaines (2001) found a benefit to informing students of the use of Turnitin.com prior to student submission of assignments. They suggest that actual checking for plagiarism using Turnitin.com followed by grade penalties for infractions serve as a deterrent to would-be plagiarizers in a way that verbal and written warnings do not.

In order to discourage students from committing online plagiarism, educators must:

* **Educate students on plagiarism, the different types of plagiarism (unintentional and intentional), the causes and the consequences that results.**
* **Understand the reasons why students may do online plagiarism and they must teach students: research skills, note taking, source citation, etc.**
* **Show students that it is easy to find out if they have committed plagiarism through the use of internet sites such as *plagiarism checker, plagiarism detector***
* **Help student realise that plagiarism is more than just borrowing by giving them real life examples (i.e.: students could be asked to take the place of an artist or musician and their art form or work; students could reflect about an original song or art work produced by themselves)**

Reference   
[*http://www.vccaedu.org/inquiry/inquiry-spring2000/i-51-guiliano.html*](https://exchange.nbed.nb.ca/owa/redir.aspx?C=6a1f9638904d4b8bb3471ecb9fff8935&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.vccaedu.org%2finquiry%2finquiry-spring2000%2fi-51-guiliano.html)(retrieved June, 2012)